



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

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(Helena) Today's consumers place great trust in the marketplace that they get what they are paying for. Retailers also rely on a fair environment where the competition is held to the same high standards that they themselves adhere to. Fairness in the marketplace is a cornerstone of economic health for consumers and businesses alike. That is why on March 2nd, 1799, John Quincy Adams signed the first weights and measures law in the United States.

Considering that as much as 50% of a family's income is used to purchase consumer goods, the impact on an inaccurate marketplace can be significant to each of us. The cost of a regulatory presence is less than \$1.00 per person per year. Yet we can realize the full return on that investment in a single trip to the market. "Weights and Measures Week is an opportunity to express appreciation for the value of our society receives for a very small investment in Weights and Measures inspection programs," says Tim Lloyd, Bureau Chief of the Weights and Measures Bureau of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry.

The affect of small inaccuracies in transactions can be very profound. For example if every gas pump in the Country were inaccurate by slightly more than a tablespoon per 5 gallons, it would seem harmless in the individual transaction. Yet it would amount to a cumulative error of about \$125 million annually. If every pound of meat were incorrectly weighed by .01lb, it would amount to 500 million pounds annually. "We need to recognize the role the Weights and Measures officials across Montana and this nation play in all commercial transactions", says Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly. "These men and women are in invisible third party in every transaction."

To advance a healthy business and consumer climate through the development and implementation of uniform and equitable weights and measures standards using a consensus building process, the National Conference on Weights and Measures ensures uniformity, consistency, and fairness in the marketplace. With more than 2,400 weights and measures regulatory professionals, it sets standards and enforces uniform procedures to verify weight, volume, length or count, ensuring that consumers get the quantity that they pay for, and that businesses sell the quantity that they intend and advertise.

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